

MICHAEL E. DE BAKEY, M.D.

DIARY OF TRIP TO BRUSSELS, BELGIUM--May 18 to 26, 1962

Friday, May 18, 1962: Left Houston on KLM Flight #684 (DC8) on schedule at 12:45 p.m. and arrived in Montreal for refueling and additional passengers, then left Montreal on schedule about 7:15 p.m. Shortly after takeoff had cocktails and then dinner. This required several hours, which is much too long since there remained only a few hours to sleep before being awakened for breakfast. The airlines have not caught up with the jet age in this respect. We arrived

Saturday, May 19, 1962 in Amsterdam about 7:15 a.m. (five minutes late), and I was met by Dr. R. DeWit (address: Overveen, Pernambucoalaan 37) who is head of the medical department of KLM. He was most gracious, showing me their medical facilities during my stay in the airport, and personally took me to the plane (a Convair, KLM #381) for Brussels. We left at 9:50 a.m. and arrived in Brussels on schedule at 10:40 a.m. It was quite rough owing to heavy winds.

Princess Liliane met me at the airport and we drove to her home. I then had time to take a bath and change clothes and then had lunch with Princess Liliane and her children, Prince Alexander and the two girls. They are handsome and charming. After lunch we discussed some of the forthcoming events and the schedule for the symposium, and later I had a chance to rest about an hour, which was most refreshing for I was beginning to feel tired as I had had only a few hours of sleep during the last twenty-four hours.

At dinner King Leopold, Princess Liliane, and Prince Alexander were present. It was a cozy, delightful dinner. King Leopold told about his visit to South America and some of his observations. We then retired to the living room for coffee and shortly afterwards Prince Alexander kissed his mother and father and retired. About 11 p.m. we also retired and I was ready for bed.

Sunday, May 20, 1962: Up this morning much refreshed, and after breakfast King Leopold, Princess Liliane and I went for a drive through the grounds and forest surrounding their home. There are several small lakes, a waterfall and some formal gardens. The trees and forest are beautifully maintained. The weather is somewhat unseasonal with light showers and a cold wind. I was glad I brought at least one heavy suit.

Shortly before lunch Dr. Alessandri from Chile arrived and we had a drink and then to lunch with all the family, including both girls and Prince Alexander. The fresh asparagus which is now in season and the beautiful and flavorsome strawberries were most delightful. We then had coffee in the living room and more conversation. A Countess from Munich --a close friend of Princess Liliane and King Leopold, joined us. She has a boy about seven years of age who is mentally retarded and wanted to learn if one of the visiting doctors might see him. I suggested Dr. Millikan.

Later in my room I read and wrote some letters, and about 8 p.m. I went down for dinner with King Leopold, Princess Liliane and the Countess. They told a story that Bishop Sheen had told them about a lady who wanted to buy a parrot. The man in the pet shop informed her

that the parrot had previously been in a house of ill fame and was probably not suitable for her home. The lady, however, liked the parrot and inquired about the possibility of teaching him new words. The man stated that this was possible but that she must place a cover over the parrot's cage and leave him in isolation for about two weeks following which he would have forgotten all that he had previously learned and could then be taught new words. She brought the parrot and did as she was instructed. At the end of two weeks she removed the cover and the first words spoken by the parrot were, "A new madam, eh!" The lady's two daughters then entered the room and the parrot said, "Two new girlies, eh!" As the lady's husband then walked into the room, the parrot said, "Same old George."

Later that evening Professor Lequime joined us, and we discussed some changes in the program. He had just received a wire from Chavez in Mexico stating that he must cancel his visit owing to urgent developments at the university. They asked me to take Chavez's place at one of the sessions.

Monday, May 21, 1962: About 9 a.m. I was driven to Ghent and the University Hospital where I met Dr. Pannier and Dr. DeRom and held a conference on a number of patients with aneurysms and occlusive lesions. They included a patient with a large syphilitic aneurysm of the ascending aorta, another with an aneurysm of the descending thoracic aorta, one with a Leriche and complete occlusion of the abdominal aorta, and several with occlusions of the iliac and femoral arteries. Following lunch we held a conference of some patients with renal artery occlusions and hypertension.

About 3 p.m. we left for Louvain where I held another conference on a series of patients with aneurysms and occlusive lesions. One patient with an aneurysm of the aortic arch is to be sent to Houston. Another patient to be sent to Houston is a young man about 21 years of age with a coarctation of the abdominal aorta opposite the renal arteries with severe hypertension. Both at Ghent and at Louvain we selected some of the patients for operation later this week.

I returned to Domaine just in time to dress for dinner. The people at the dinner included Mary Lasker and Florence Mahoney, Denton Cooley, Dr. ^{Ivanovic} ~~Imencii~~ (Yugoslavia), Myasnikoff (Moscow), Brom and his wife (Netherlands), the Lequimes, King Leopold's mother who is 86 years of age and is most charming and beautiful, ^{Dr. J.} ~~Mr.~~ Collins, President of the Cardiological Foundation, Dr. Froment (Lyon). It was most enjoyable.

Tuesday, May 22, 1962: Up early and breakfasted with Drs. Lenegre, Froment, Mary Martin, and Denton Cooley and then we left for the Academy where the meeting is to be held. The inaugural ceremony was very impressive in a beautiful hall. We had reserved places and I was seated between Mary Lasker and Florence Mahoney on the front row. Princess Liliane and King Leopold were seated in a box. Beautiful speeches were made about the efforts of a number of individuals who had contributed to the development of the field as well as about Princess Liliane and her efforts to promote the work in Belgium.

Following this inaugural ceremony we had coffee and began the scientific sessions. I was asked to preside in Dr. Chavez's place. At the termination of this session we drove to a beautiful chateau where we were guests of the Minister of Public Health and his wife--J. L. Custers.

In the afternoon I came with Clark Millikan in the car with King Leopold, Princess Liliane, Mary Lasker and Florence Mahoney to the Domaine. Clark Millikan was brought to see the Countess's child with some neurologic disturbance.

In the evening we went to the University of Louvain for dinner with all the members of the Colloquium. A delightful evening.

Wednesday, May 23, 1962: Up early this morning and met at 8 o'clock to go to Louvain to operate on a 75 year old man with an aneurysm of the right popliteal artery. The arteriogram showed that there was no outflow. I did a lumbar sympathectomy and then performed an endoaneurysmorrhaphy. All went well.

Then to the Academy to show my movie at 11:30 a.m. It was well received and later I learned that some did not see it and have asked that it be shown again on Friday.

We returned to Domaine for lunch with King Leopold and Princess Liliane and a number of the surgeons from different lands attending the meeting.

At 3 p.m. I was picked up and driven to the Clinic St. Michel, a private hospital in Brussels, to operate on an aneurysm of the abdominal aorta. It was a fairly typical case and I used a bifurcation woven dacron graft. All went well.

We then went to a cocktail party at the American Embassy-- Mr. McArthur--and from there to dinner at the old home of Erasmus. It was picturesque and enjoyable.

Thursday, May 24, 1962: To the University of Ghent this a.m. with Princess Liliane, Professor Lenegre and Froment. Dr. Cooley and I were scheduled to operate on T.V. I performed an aorto-bilateral femoral bypass graft for a patient with Leriche syndrome, complete obstruction of abdominal aorta to renal arteries. All went well.

After lunch we had a symposium and I presented some slides on long-term results of various aortic and arterial occlusive diseases. Except for the presentations of ^{Daglot} ~~Daglot~~ on closed heart closure of atrial septal defects and Orbans and Govaerts' discussions of sympathectomy and adrenalectomy for peripheral vascular diseases, the presentations were excellent.

We returned to Domaine and had the formal dinner in the evening. I was asked to present an interview for television which I did in French.

The dinner was beautiful with over 225 guests. Professor Lenegre and I gave a little talk of grateful appreciation.

Friday, May 25, 1962: To Louvain this morning to operate on a patient with severe hypertension and bilateral renal artery occlusion. I did a patch graft angioplasty on the left renal artery and an abdominal renal artery bypass on the right side. All went well.

Then to lunch with the deSelliers and Mary Lasker and Florence Mahoney. It was most enjoyable. Mr. deSellier really looks fine.

About 4 p.m. we went to the LeBlanc reception in a beautiful old chateau and later we returned to Domaine for a quiet dinner with the Princess and King Leopold and the Broms and Clarence Crafoord.

Saturday, May 26, 1962: A good night's sleep and a leisurely breakfast this a.m.

Later Professor Lequime arrived and we discussed with Princess Liliane and Clarence Crafoord the problem of an integrated cardiovascular medical and surgical service at the University of Brussels. It was agreed that a new surgical chief must be appointed and it was hoped that a Belgian surgeon who has been working for five years with Clarence Crafoord might be appointed. He will plan to spend a year with us first.

We then had an early luncheon and I had to leave for the airport before dessert was served.

My return flight was uneventful and on schedule.